



OSCE PA
BERLIN 7-11 July 2018
27th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President George Tsereteli (MP, Georgia)

Closing remarks to the 27th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
Berlin, 11 July 2017

Secretary General Greminger,

Fellow parliamentarians,

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have just adopted a very strong Berlin Declaration to guide our work in the weeks, months and years ahead. We have engaged in lively debates, identified problems facing the OSCE area and the world, offered ideas and solutions, and in some cases, we have criticized each other.

Criticism is not always enjoyable, but like a bitter medicine, sometimes it must be swallowed for the sake of your health.

What everyone should remember is that when we criticize each other, it is in a spirit of sharing best practices and self-improvement. And first of all, it is in the interest of serving our people. We point out shortcomings, but we do so in the hopes of improving our practices and implementing our OSCE commitments.

And of course, we must also ensure that this forum – the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly – remains strong. This organization has great value in the areas that it can have the most impact, and this is why I so strongly support Secretary General Greminger's agenda of making the OSCE "fit for purpose."

We must also carry on with our own homework and implement the necessary reforms to enhance the visibility and effectiveness of our Assembly and ensure it remains the respected institution that it is today.

Our proactive engagement is necessary to maintain the integrity of our work in all fields, especially in election observation, gender mainstreaming and peace- and confidence-building.

We should all work to strengthen the OSCE, including by implementing its principles and communicating its messages to our governments and the people of our home countries. We must let people know the value of this organization and why it matters.

The Parliamentary Assembly also must continue to pursue good co-operation with the OSCE's executive structures. As we reach out to the OSCE, we hope that the OSCE also makes full use of the vast expertise and knowledge of our parliamentarians.

Dear colleagues,

Our work now is to ensure effective steps toward implementation of our resolutions. As always, I am at your disposal and I thank you once again for the faith you have placed in me as President of this Assembly.

It has been an honor and a privilege to work in this beautiful and historic building the past several days.

Like so much of Berlin, the Reichstag combines the old with the new in a way that reminds us of our history while also celebrating our future.

To paraphrase a great politician, today we speak about wars and politics so that our children can dedicate their time to arts and sciences.

On behalf of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, I would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the German Bundestag and the German Delegation for the excellent organization of this Annual Session.

There are so many people involved in the organization of a meeting like this – all the people behind the scenes who provide technical and logistical support, the interpreters who have worked long hours, the people who make sure that the meeting rooms are well-equipped, and the photographers and IT specialists who have worked so hard.

The enthusiasm and goodwill they brought to their jobs has made this a successful and memorable event.

Let us all give them a warm round of applause.

My dear friends,

Thank you once again. The 27th Annual Session is closed.